1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

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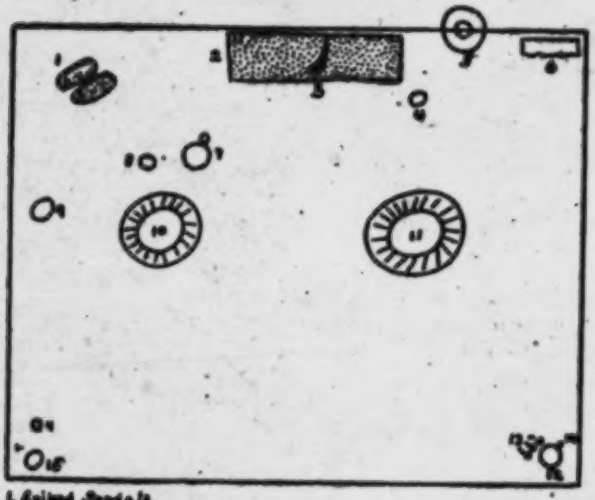

1. Spined Sandals.
2. Bed of Spikes.
3. Rank Horn.
4. Thistle Plants.
5. Whitewash for mounds.
6. Stone from Hindu Temple, coloured red.
7. Small mound with overhanging black bangles - to Khermai.
8. Pole with flags
9. Pole about 8 ft long coloured red with bangles attached. Bundle of grass at top; iron hook at base.
10. White washed mound to Khermai.
11. Do to Markat Deo.
12. Nim tree.
13. Poles with flags as seen on the right
    Black bangles on poles
    Tongs for Sannyasi Deo
    Teeth of wire
    Three bundles of grass (chhaur)
14. Iron Trident
15. Pole with bangles and chhaur

Fig. 26

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Only once did we find a Kol shrine with a roof. Usually shrines are just raised platforms of earth about the base of a tree, preferably a *sim* tree. The older and larger the tree the better. 778

Concomitants of Worship. The following items are usually found as component parts of the central village shrines.

1. *Flags (Jhanda).* Flags are an essential part of the village shrine. They are usually set up on bamboo poles which are in turn bound to the trunk of the *sim* tree. It is also not infrequent that these are placed high above in the tops of the tree where the flag waves over all. The flag makes it known, they say, that the deity is present, and the colours and colour combinations usually indicate which deities are likely to be found there. The flags also serve as an attraction to the godlings who may come and perch upon them. They also frighten away evil spirits. The bamboo pole is usually about fifteen feet long and may have from one to seven flags attached to it. The village pays for the purchase of these flags unless there is someone who wishes to gain merit by giving them to the shrine. The Kol *panda* who is in charge of the shrine and its properties, puts the flags on the pole and sets it in place. The flags themselves are from 18 to 24 inches in length and about six inches wide at the widest part. 778 202

In addition to these larger flags on the bamboo pole, there are always found smaller flags at the base of the tree or at the spot where the blood of the sacrifice is sprinkled. They are quite small and are brought by individuals or families who place them in position when the offering is made. These flags are usually red. When one seeks a boon from the goddess and makes a promise to give a sacrifice if the boon is granted, he should set up a red flag as a witness to his promise. A flag is set up by those going on a journey as a witness to the fact that they will make an offering when they return safely.

In general red is the favourite colour of the *devis*. There are some colours which are characteristic of certain *devis*. Kali likes black; Asmani likes white or red; Khermai is sometimes given green, though red is more common; yellow is for Sannyasi. This set-up lacks consistency, like much among the Kols, for some deny any particular significance and say that the flags are merely decorative. While the smaller flags may be set up at any time, it is usual that the larger flags are set up only once or maybe twice a year, *Chaita* and *Kunwar*, spring and fall, being the accepted times for new flags. [776 822] [184]

2. *Iron Tridents (Trisul).* These are found in varying sizes and numbers. There should be at least one long one with a very sharp point, see figure 25, and there are usually more. Smaller ones 778 411

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Worship at a Shrine. An account may here be given of the worship of the smallpox goddess as witnessed at a village shrine. The first hint of the matter was the beat of drums as a group approached the shrine. The instrument was a kettle-drum, hung about the neck of the drummer. Following the drummer came a young man with a brass tray filled with small *puris* and cocoanuts, carried on his shoulder. Beside him was a younger boy who was carrying two red flags, one of them rather large and on a long pole, and the other proportionately shorter. Both flags tapered to a point. Next came a woman apparently much perturbed, with dishevelled hair. Her head was partially covered by her *sari*. Close behind was her husband who seemed to be a rather elderly man, and with him was a small boy who appeared to be ill. It was not realized at first that this boy was the victim of smallpox. When they reached the shrine the drummer took his stand to one side and continued to beat his drum, while a woman came up and poured water over the shrine and the representations of Khermai and Asmani *devi*. As the drummer played, the woman with the dishevelled hair, who happened to be the mother of the lad, began to stretch herself repeatedly at full length before the shrine, and then, as it were, measured her length around and around the platform on which the shrine was situated. As she did this, she held a cocoanut in her right hand. She was then followed by her husband who rolled in the dust before the shrine until instructed by the *panda* to measure his length around the shrine as his wife was doing. Just before he came to the shrine his body had been anointed with *haldi* and oil, and this gathered much dust and dirt. The larger boy with the tray also went about the shrine as did the boy who had carried the flags. They did not, however, measure their lengths. An uncle from some other village joined them and each went around seven times in a clockwise direction. Except for the drumming, the measuring of their lengths about the shrine was done in silence. Only the adults actually measured their lengths.

When the proper number rounds had been completed, the group stopped at the steps of the platform in front of Kher *devi's* shrine. The tray of cocoanuts and *puris* was placed on the platform and the people ascended the steps and sat on the platform. The drummer seated himself and continued the beating of the drum, and the mother of the sick boy began to perform acts in which she appeared to be imploring the deity. She prostrated her head to the ground, then sat up and wildly swung her body, first from the upright position with a sweeping motion, to a position of prostrate petition. Except for the gentle drumming all this too was done in silence. She then poured water over the shrine and wiped it carefully with a rag. Asmani